

# Health and Safety Bulletin

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## **2009 TUC Safety Rep Award**

The TUC wants to demonstrate and acknowledge the range of work currently undertaken by lay union representatives on behalf of their members and the community. For the third year, the TUC will be making an award to the trade unionist that represents the best aspects of being a safety rep.

This is not intended to be a competitive award, and the TUC is keen to develop this award over the coming years. This year, the award will be made at the 2009 Congress, which takes place in Liverpool from 14-17 September 2009.

In line with the practice for other TUC awards there will be one overall winner of the award, but we are encouraged to submit as many nominations as we wish. However, each nomination must be signed by UNISON's General Secretary. Complete the attached form and return it to the address below by 1 May 2009.

Please also note the further instructions on the attached nomination form, including the need for a completed equality monitoring form and obtaining the consent of the nominated safety rep. The TUC's decision about any aspect of this award is final.

If your branch wishes to nominate a safety representative please complete and return the enclosed nomination form to: TUC Safety Rep Award, c/o Shelley Cole, UNISON, Health and Safety Unit, 1 Mabledon Place, London, WC1H 9AJ. We will then ask Dave Prentis, the General Secretary, to sign the form in time for the TUC deadline of 5 June.

When completing the nomination form, remember that it is the activities as a safety rep that will be considered rather than the general health and safety work of the branch.

## **Slips and Trips - new e-learning package**

UNISON has worked with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to develop a new e-learning package, following on from our involvement in the HSEs' slips, trips, and falls campaign. This second phase will build on the momentum of previous work. It will continue to raise awareness about the risks of slips, trips, and falls from height at work; and how simple it is to take action to prevent these accidents from happening.

Although there is something in the campaign for every workplace, we have ensured that the HSE target sectors where members are at a higher risk from work related slips, trips, and falls.

This phase of the campaign moves the focus on to promoting action in the workplace. This new innovative e-tool called STEP (Slips and Trips e-learning package) will help employers take the action needed to prevent around 11,000 major injuries to workers each year, caused by slips, trips, and falls. It is available and free to at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/step/index.htm>.

Branches and safety reps are asked to promote the STEP e-learning package - get your employer to put it on their intranet web pages. Also visit the HSE Shattered Lives website at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/shatteredlives>.

## Updated Brown Book

*The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations* (the Brown Book) has recently been updated by the HSE, and copies of the UNISON version are now available. Branches can order the A4 booklet from the Communications Department. Go to the online catalogue: <http://www.unison.org.uk/catalogue>, email: [stockorders@unison.co.uk](mailto:stockorders@unison.co.uk), or tel: 020 7551 1481; quoting both the documents' title and stock no. 1819. Alternatively, download a copy from: <http://www.unison.org.uk/safety>

## New Violence Poster

Right across the public sector workforce, violence continues to be a major concern for UNISON members. Violence is a major occupational hazard and can take the form of physical and non-physical attacks. Either is not acceptable. To supplement our work and the UNISON guide on violence, *It's Not Part of the Job*, UNISON now has a new poster. *It's Not Part of the Job* – UNISON's violence poster can be downloaded at: <http://www.unison.org.uk/file/4096.pdf> or ordered from the Communications Unit. Go to the online catalogue: <http://www.unison.org.uk/catalogue>, email: [stockorders@unison.co.uk](mailto:stockorders@unison.co.uk), or tel: 020 7551 1481; quoting both the documents' title and stock no. 2728.

## Health and Safety Recruitment leaflet

UNISON's new recruitment leaflet on health and safety demonstrates how UNISON understands the significance of good working conditions for your health, safety, and welfare at work. UNISON branches, safety activists, and stewards can use it to recruit members on one of the main reasons why people join unions – health and safety. Download the new recruitment leaflet from: <http://www.unison.org.uk/safety> or order it from the Communications Unit. Go to the online catalogue: <http://www.unison.org.uk/catalogue>, email: [stockorders@unison.co.uk](mailto:stockorders@unison.co.uk), or tel: 020 7551 1481; quoting stock no. 2729.

## Eye Tests and Computer/Monitor Users

UNISON's information sheet *Eye Tests and VDUs* has been updated. This document complements information contained in *Are You Sitting Comfortably*, UNISON's guide display screen equipment guide (computers, etc). Branches can obtain the information sheet at: <http://www.unison.org.uk/safety>, or by contacting the Health and Safety Unit. Email: [healthandsafety@unison.co.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@unison.co.uk) or tel: 020 7551 1156. Download the guide at: <http://www.unison.org.uk/file/4095.pdf>, or order it from the Communications Unit. Go to the online catalogue: <http://www.unison.org.uk/catalogue>, email: [stockorders@unison.co.uk](mailto:stockorders@unison.co.uk), or tel: 020 7551 1481; quoting the documents' title and the stock no. 2692.

## **World TB Day 24 March 2009**

World TB Day raises awareness about the global epidemic of tuberculosis (TB) and efforts to eliminate the disease. One-third of the world's population is currently infected with TB. The Stop TB Partnership, a network of organisations and countries fighting TB, organizes the Day to highlight the scope of the disease and how to prevent and cure it.

The annual event on 24 March marks the day in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch detected the cause of tuberculosis, the TB bacillus. This was a first step towards diagnosing and curing tuberculosis. The World Health Organisation is working to cut TB prevalence rates and deaths in half by 2015.

UNISON branches are reminded that a TB information sheet is available from UNISON. It contains information on awareness, and those in high risk areas of the workforce. Download your copy at: <http://www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/B185.pdf> or contact the Health and Safety Unit. Email: [healthandsafety@unison.co.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@unison.co.uk) or tel: 020 7551 1156.

## **Water@work**

Water@work is an initiative created by UNISON which is designed to promote the benefits of mains fed drinking water from the tap. Promoting good health in the workplace and taking steps to enable this is not as easy as it sounds. This is why UNISON and its strategic partners are developing resources to help our members and the employers understand the benefits of drinking mains fed water. We have recently updated our information sheet on water coolers and drinks machines. Download your copy at: <http://www.unison.org.uk/safety> or contact the Health and Safety Unit. Email: [healthandsafety@unison.co.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@unison.co.uk) or tel: 020 7551 1156.

We are promoting and encouraging mains fed drinking water in all public places and workplaces. UNISONs' National Health and Safety Committee has given the water@work campaign its' full support, as has the HSE and the TUC.

Branches are encouraged to raise awareness of the water@work campaign and to encourage a reduction in the procurement and consumption of bottled water. For more information on the campaign, go to: <http://www.wateratwork.org/>

## **Stress Conference – Your Experience Sought**

Have you suffered from work-related stress and challenged your employer/managers over what caused that illness? Have you pursued collective issues on work-related stress and its' ill-health effects, or taken a grievance or even an Employment Tribunal against your employer? If so, are you willing to give a short presentation at the next UK National Work-Stress Network Conference? It takes place on 21 – 22 November near Birmingham. If you are interested in supporting the event, which is endorsed by UNISON nationally, then please contact: Ian Draper, Network convenor on 07966-196033 or email: [iandraper@workstress.net](mailto:iandraper@workstress.net).